

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A homoserine transsuccinylase which possesses at least one mutation as compared with a homoserine transsuccinylase wild-type enzyme and exhibits a reduced sensitivity toward L-methionine or SAM as compared with the wild-type enzyme, with the wild-type enzyme possessing an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 which comprises a constituent sequence AspGlyXaaXaaXaaThrGlyAlaPro between positions 90 and 115 and a constituent sequence TyrGlnXaaThrPro between positions 285 and 310, with position 1 of the amino acid sequence being the starting methionine, wherein the mutation is an amino acid replacement of the aspartate in the constituent sequence AspGlyXaaXaaXaaThrGlyAlaPro or an amino acid replacement of the tyrosine in the constituent sequence TyrGlnXaaThrPro.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): A homoserine transsuccinylase as claimed in claim 1, wherein it exhibits a

resistance toward SAM or L-methionine which is increased (increased Ki) at least 2-fold as compared with that of the wild type.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): A homoserine transsuccinylase as claimed in claim 1, wherein it contains a mutation selected from the group consisting of Asp101Asn, Asp101His, Asp101Cys, Asp101Ser, Asp101Tyr, Asp101Ala, Asp101Ile, Tyr294Cys, Tyr294Leu, Tyr294 Ala, Tyr294Pro, Tyr294Gln, Gyr294Lys, and a mutation wherein Tyr294 is deleted.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): An isolated nucleic acid which encodes a homoserine transsuccinylase as claimed in claim 1.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): A plasmid transformed with an isolated nucleic acid encoding homoserine transsuccinylase as claimed in claim 4 together with a promoter.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): An isolated microbial host cell, wherein it contains a feedback-resistant metA allele as claimed in claim 4.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): An isolated microbial host cell as claimed in claim 6, wherein it is a Gram-negative bacterial strain, preferably E. coli.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A method for preparing L-methionine or SAM by culturing an isolated microbial host cell as claimed in claim 6.